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JAPAN'S NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL FROM LEAGUE  
27 March 1933.

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The Japanese Government believe that the national policy of Japan, which has for its aim to insure the peace of the Orient and thereby to contribute to the cause of peace throughout the world, is identical in spirit with the mission of the League of Nations, which is to achieve international peace and security. It has always been with pleasure, therefore, that this country has for thirteen years past, as an original Member of the League, and a permanent Member of its Council, extended a full measure of cooperation with her fellow-Members towards the attainment of its high purpose. It is indeed a matter of historical fact that Japan has continuously participated in the various activities of the League with a zeal not inferior to that exhibited by any other nation. At the same time, it is and has always been the conviction of the Japanese Government that in order to render possible the maintenance of peace in various regions of the world, it is necessary in existing circumstances to allow the operation of the Covenant of the League to vary in accordance with the actual conditions prevailing in each of those regions. Only by acting on this just and equitable principle can the League fulfil its mission and increase its influence.

Acting on this conviction, the Japanese Government, ever since the Sino-Japanese dispute was, in September, 1931, submitted to the League, have, at meetings of the League and on other occasions continually set forward a consistent view. This was, that if the League was to settle the issue fairly and equitably, and to make a real contribution to the promotion of peace in the Orient, and thus enhance its prestige, it should acquire a complete grasp of the actual conditions in this quarter of the globe and apply the Covenant of the League in accordance with these conditions. They have repeatedly emphasized and insisted upon the absolute necessity of taking into consideration the fact that China is not an organized State--that its internal conditions and external relations are characterized by extreme confusion and complexity, and by many abnormal and exceptional features--and that, accordingly, the general principles and usages of International Law which govern the ordinary relations between nations are found to be considerably modified in their operation so far as China is concerned, resulting in the quite abnormal and unique international practices which actually prevail in that country.

However, the majority of the Members of the League evinced in the course of its deliberations during the past seventeen months a failure either to grasp these realities or else to face them and take them into proper account. Moreover, it has frequently been made manifest in these deliberations that there exist serious differences of opinion between Japan and these Powers concerning the application and even the interpretation of various international engagements and obligations including the Covenant of the League and the principles of International Law. As a result, the Report adopted by the Assembly at the special session of 24 February last, entirely misapprehending the spirit of Japan, pervaded as it is by no other desire than the maintenance of peace in the Orient, contains gross errors both in the ascertainment of facts and in the conclusions deduced. In asserting that the action of the Japanese Army at the time of the Incident of 18 September and subsequently did not fall within the just limits of self-defence, the Report assigned no reasons and came to an

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arbitrary conclusion, and in ignoring alike the state of tension which preceded, and the various aggravations which succeeded, the Incident--for all of which the full responsibility is incumbent upon China--the Report creates a source of fresh conflict in the political arena of the Orient. By refusing to acknowledge the actual circumstances that led to the foundation of Manchukuo, and by attempting to challenge the position taken up by Japan in recognizing the new State, it cuts away the ground for the stabilization of the Far Eastern situation. Nor can the terms laid down in its recommendations--as was fully explained in the Statement issued by this Government on 25 February last--ever be of any possible service in securing enduring peace in these regions.

The conclusion must be that in seeking a solution of the question the majority of the League have attached greater importance to upholding inapplicable formulas than to the real task of assuring peace, and higher value to the vindication of academic theses than to the eradication of the sources of future conflict. For these reasons, and because of the profound differences of opinion existing between Japan and the majority of the League in their interpretation of the Covenant and of other treaties, the Japanese Government have been led to realize the existence of an irreconcilable divergence of views, dividing Japan and the League on policies of peace, and especially as regards the fundamental principles to be followed in the establishment of a durable peace in the Far East. The Japanese Government, believing that in these circumstances there remains no room for further cooperation, hereby give notice, in accordance with the provisions of Article 1, Paragraph 3. of the Covenant, of the intention of Japan to withdraw from the League of Nations.